

Carmen,

This review was bumped at the last minute in favor of a Bette Davis article, but would have appeared in the L.A. Herald Examiner:

San Francisco-based filmmaker Curt McDowell has always been a pioneer in sexual frankness, but his new film, "Loads" -- premiering tonight at the Pasadena Filmforum -- goes far beyond his earlier all-out efforts and puts such big-time dabblers in eroticism as Bernardo Bertolucci and Nagisa Oshima, decidedly in the shade.

Leaving, as the saying goes, nothing to the imagination, the film details McDowell's successful seductions of otherwise heterosexual men in a 'Greatest Hits/ diary / big-game trophy style. The film's real interest, however, revolves around the curiously elusive form McDowell has given to his let-it-all-hang-out material. By a complex interweaving of individual sequences, and a halting narration that seems on the verge of explaining more than it intends, McDowell upsets accepted notions of both filmmaking intent and spectator access. The film may be explicit on one level, but on another it's very cagey, for McDowell systematically refuses to allow the viewer a means to position himself in relation to what's on the screen. We're voyeurs kept -- to our discomforted surprise -- at arms length.

The easily offended are of course advised to avoid such sexcapades. But if homoerotic shenanigans don't faze you -- or even actively interest you -- "Loads" offers a (needless to say) unique experience."

David Ehrenstein, Los Angeles Herald Examiner

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